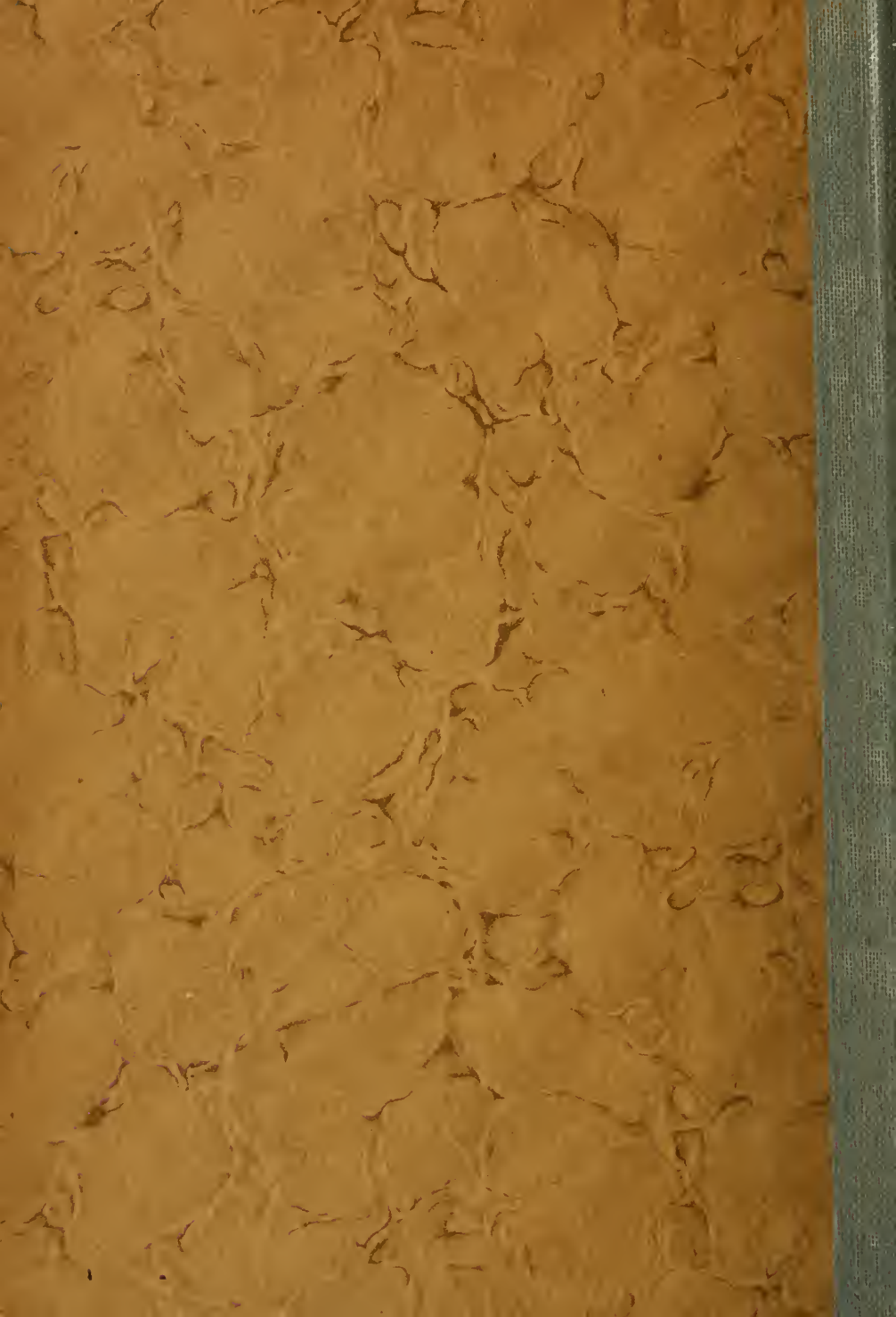




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SALMON. David.
Impressions of Education
in America. 1899.



SOME IMPRESSIONS
OF
AMERICAN EDUCATION:

A Lecture delivered on Monday, July 3rd,
1899, at the Swansea Training College,
by the Principal,

DAVID SALMON.

Swansea:

E. and J. GRIFFITHS, 11, High Street.

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SOME IMPRESSIONS

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AMERICAN EDUCATION.

INTRODUCTION.

When I remind you that the stars and stripes float over a territory more than fifty times as large as England and Wales, and when I inform you that I spent only four weeks in that vast country you will not be surprised to learn that I did not visit more than four States, and that I did not see the inside of any school in a small town or rural district; and you would deem me guilty of ridiculous rashness if I attempted to describe American education as a whole. When, therefore, I make any assertion which seems somewhat broad, you will please to consider it based not merely on what I saw, but also on what I heard from a number of leading administrators, professors and teachers, and on what I have read in many official documents; and I would point out that, so long as I limit myself to an account of peculiarities and differences, the brevity of my stay in the States is no disability; it is, on the contrary, a gain, for I came away before what at first seemed strange began to grow familiar.

SYSTEMS OF ADMINISTRATION.

An Englishman who tries to obtain a general view is at once struck with the absence of any central authority. America has nothing corresponding to our Education Department, our Science and Art Department, our Lord President,

our Vice-President, or our Code. The action of the Federal Government is confined to the establishment and maintenance of the Bureau of Education at Washington. The head of the Bureau is a Commissioner, and his function (which he discharges admirably) is the collection and dissemination of statistics respecting the school systems of the Union, and facts respecting various phases of school work all over the world.

In education, as in most other matters, each State is perfectly independent. Each strives in its own way to reach a common ideal, unmistakably indicated by common political needs. The people are deeply convinced of the truth of the motto carved on one of the façades of Boston Public Library, "The Commonwealth requires the education of the people as a safeguard of order and liberty." In all countries ignorance is a disgrace and a burden; in a country where every man has a share in the government it is also a danger. George Washington dwelt on this in his farewell address, when he exhorted his fellow-citizens to promote "as an object of primary importance institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion," he said, "as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." A free land must choose between the teacher and the demagogue—if the schoolmaster is not paid now there will be the judge and the jailor to pay later.

Each State provides, then, for all its boys and girls, for all its youths and maidens, for all its men and women, not as much instruction as they can afford to pay for, but as much as they can afford to take for nothing. Every State has a complete series of schools consisting of the primary school, the grammar school, and the high school. In each of these the course of instruction, as a rule, covers four years, the usual age for

entering the primary school being six. Below the primary school there is, in progressive cities, the kindergarten, and above the high school there are in many cases normal schools, colleges, and universities. In addition to these institutions, maintained by public funds, there are sectarian elementary schools (called "parochial"), and many places of higher education built and endowed by private beneficence.

While all States seek to attain the same end, there is the greatest possible diversity in the methods of organisation by which they have sought to attain it. There may be a highly centralised system, as in the State of New York, which has a superintendent, but no Board of Education; or there may be a highly localised system, as in Massachusetts, which has a Board of Education, but no superintendent; but the diversity among the State systems is uniformity itself compared with the infinite variety among the systems in the separate cities, counties, townships and districts. The township may be the unit, and the authority may be a School Committee, as in Massachusetts, a Board of Education, as in Ohio, or a trustee, as in Indiana; the district, with its Committee or Board, may be the unit, or it may be a sub-division of a town, as in Connecticut, of a township, as in Michigan, or of a county, as in the Southern States. The Board, by whatever name called, may be nominated by the Governor, or the Mayor, or the Judges, or the political "Boss"; or it may be elected by the people; it may have all the powers of our School Boards; it may have the power of paying but not of appointing or dismissing teachers; it may have the power of paying teachers, but not of fixing their salaries; it may have legislative functions only, the executive duties being discharged on the business side by the school director and on the educational side by the school superintendent.

I will not myself venture to express an opinion on the merits of the American plan, but will quote the opinions of two

competent and unbiassed observers. M. Buisson, one of the chief officials of the French Department of Public Instruction, who represented his government at the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876, says that local autonomy carried to such an excess should rather be called anarchy and waste (*gaspillage*): and Dr. Woodrow Wilson, an American writer, says:—"Nowhere is there sufficient centralisation of control. State superintendents or other central educational authorities are without real administrative powers; county superintendents seldom have much authority; township Trustees or Committees, as a rule, have little more than a general supervision and power to advise; usually the directors of the smallest area have the greater part of the total of administrative authority, applying their quota of even the State taxes according to their discretion. The result is variety in the qualifications of teachers, variety in the method of their choice, variety in courses of study, variety in general efficiency." *

I would, however, mention that the unbounded liberty given to localities allows a wealthy and ambitious city to make very rapid progress in a very short time; though, on the other hand, it allows an ignorant or parsimonious Board to break every commandment in the educational decalogue without reproof or punishment.

Furthermore, this liberty fosters the American tendency to try new ways. Fear of the inspector would prevent an English teacher from effecting a radical change in method; and if inspector and teacher could agree on the desirability of a radical change in the courses of study prescribed by the Code, fear of the central authority would deter both from attempting it. Where there is no central authority, no Code, and no inspector, and

*State and Federal Governments of the United States, p. 93.

where the man most likely to have views (that is the superintendent) is the very man who is in a position to ensure their adoption, there is nothing except natural conservatism and a dislike of pedagogic vivisection to prevent the making of experiments. In every town I asked for the current course of study, but was almost invariably told that it was under revision. Before visiting one normal school I was warned not to ask for it, because there the courses grew obsolete faster than they could be printed. That changes should be frequently made in the subjects or methods of instruction will appear an evil—to Englishmen; that they should be easy to make is not an un-mixed evil. A reform can be accomplished in America sooner than we can convince the Government (or the Government can convince us) that any reform is needed. In a book published only six years ago* the author points out the faults in the public schools of certain great cities. I visited several of those cities and what I saw proved clearly that most of the faults have already disappeared.

PUBLIC INTEREST IN EDUCATION.

I have been often asked "Do you think" (or "Don't you think") "American education superior to ours?" To this leading question I answer "It is different"; but I have no hesitation in affirming the superiority of America to England in one respect, and that is in the interest manifested by the public in education. With us, ratepayers are periodically reminded that there are School Boards, and a certain number will take the trouble to vote for School Board members once in three years, especially if religious or personal issues have been raised. Some thousands of people, again, subscribe to Voluntary schools, and some thousands denounce such schools, much of our interest being sectarian rather than educational. I wonder how many

*Dr. J. M. Rice: The Public School System of the United States
(New York, 1893).

English men or English women have ever visited a school unless they were connected with the management of it.

In America I never entered a school without finding other visitors; at the back of a class-room there was generally a row of chairs placed ready for them; in the hall there were often printed directions to them; in several colleges their reception and guidance was the sole duty of one person; and I was told that it is customary for the ladies of a place to organize themselves into visiting committees. Strangers are taken as a matter of course to see a town's public museum, public library, public art gallery, and public schools.

Visits are only one manifestation of interest; generous (sometimes lavish) expenditure ~~are~~ another and more tangible manifestation. Of collective or individual liberality I could cite innumerable instances. The first normal school which I visited (provided by the city of Philadelphia to train teachers for its own schools) cost £80,000 to build and equip. The smaller normal school at Albany cost £51,000, and the mayor of a town of only 40,000 inhabitants told me that their high school cost £50,000. While I was in Chicago the Legislature of Illinois made a grant of £60,000 to the State University.

Private benefactions are regarded as a regular source of income of the public schools and are spent not in relieving the taxes but in supplying the secondary needs—libraries, busts, pictures, scientific appliances, &c. Social economists often criticise severely the monopolies of the American millionaire, but he has one monopoly which excites no unfriendly comment—the monopoly of founding universities, colleges, and institutes. I could not name a twentieth part of the great gifts which have been made to education, but I will quote a few of the gifts of

over a million dollars to universities and colleges alone :—

Asa Parker ...	Lehigh University, Pa. ...	£700,000
Johns Hopkins ..	Johns Hopkins Univ., Md....	700,000
Isaac Rich ..	Boston University, Mass. ...	400,000
Leonard Case ...	School of Appl. Sci., Ohio ...	240,000
James Lick ...	University of California ...	330,000
Peter Cooper ...	Cooper Union, N. Y.	240,000
Ezra Cornell ..	Cornell University, N. Y.	200,000
The Vanderbilts	Vanderbilt University, Ten.	355,000
Paul Tulane ...	Tulane University, La. ..	500,000
W. C. De Pauw	De Pauw University, Ind. ...	300,000
Leland Stanford	Leland Stanford, jr., Un., Cal	1,000,000*
John C. Green ...	Princeton College, N. J. ..	300,000
Stephen Girard	Girard College, Pa.	1,600,000
Jonas G. Clark ...	Clark University, Mass. ...	400,000†

The gifts and bequests made to libraries, colleges, galleries, hospitals, &c. amounted in

1893	...	to	£5,800,000
1894	...	...	£6,400,000
1895	...	...	£6,560,000
1896	...	...	£5,400,000
1897	...	...	£9,000,000
1898	...	...	£7,600,000.

Of the last sum, £700,000 was given by women. I may add that the amount given in 1897 by all the subscribers to all the voluntary schools in England and Wales was £843,874.

The president of a university on whom I called told me that he had within a week received separate visits from two ladies, each anxious to give half-a-million dollars for the benefit

* Mrs. Stanford has just bequeathed £2,000,000 to endow this university.

† Boone : Education in the United States, p. 206.

of education, and each desirous of advice as to the best way of spending the money. The printed history of such a young institution as Teachers College, Columbia University, shows gifts of two million dollars, though it does not show a recent gift of half-a-million for the extension of the buildings. Mr. Drexel, of Philadelphia, gave three million dollars to establish the institute called after him, while a similar institute at Brooklyn was the sole gift of Mr. Charles Pratt. When an Englishman grows rich beyond the dreams of avarice, his first ambition appears to be that his name should be lost in a peerage; when an American grows rich, his first ambition appears to be that his name should be perpetuated in a college or other place of higher education.

Lavish expenditure of public or private money is only one of the many signs of the general love of learning. In England, teachers are often held in scant respect. I have known men and women ashamed to say that they were Board teachers. In America, the teacher of even a primary school is honoured. I am afraid that it will be long before an English School Board passes a resolution like that (not the only one of the kind) which I extract from the latest report of the Cambridge superintendent: "Voted that the new school.....be named 'the Roberts School' in honour of Benjamin W. Roberts, who for nearly fifty years has been a faithful and successful teacher in Cambridge." While I was in New York, the promotion of an assistant to be head-mistress was made the occasion of a public ceremony, reported in the newspapers—I will not say as fully as a prize fight, but quite as fully as the day's proceedings of the State legislature, unless they happened to border on a prize fight. The school room was gaily decorated, there was a large audience, and the teacher was formally installed by the chairman of the Board—not the Board of a village, but of the second largest city in the world. I do not suppose that he knew her from Eve, except by the fashion of

her dress),—it was the office and not the woman that he was honouring.

We have all heard that politics in the States are corrupt, and that the infection has spread to the schools. Politics, English and American, are alike outside my province; but I made some enquiries about corruption in school administration. When I was in Samaria I was told that there might be a little in Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem I was told that such a thing had been heard of in Jericho. I believe that party considerations do sometimes influence a governor or mayor in nominating members of School Boards, and members of School Boards in appointing teachers; but I will not begin to throw stones so long as I live in a Crystal Palace where discretion in the choice of relatives or friends and virtue in the choice of church or chapel are sometimes better titles to promotion than professional merit. And I have no fear for the future of American education. Let the politicians once threaten any serious injury to it, and the nation will rise in its might and crush them. People who have given so many indisputable proofs of the high esteem in which they hold the public school will not long suffer it to be the perquisite of a party "boss."

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

I have once or twice referred incidentally to the superintendent of schools, and as he is the chief executive officer I must say something about him. We have nothing like him. His manifold duties are discharged in this country by the Code maker, the Government and School Board Inspectors, the School Board Clerk, and the Training College Professor. The ideal superintendent draws up the courses of study for schools of all grades, appoints the teachers, watches them at their work, holds frequent conferences with them, lectures them on the principles and methods of education, explains the ideas embodied in his courses, points out the common faults in

their lessons, and, above all, tries to inspire them with his own enthusiasm. It is true everywhere that as is the teacher so is the school; in America it is also true that as is the superintendent so is the teacher. The superintendent has more influence within his own domain than our Government inspector has within his. The inspector has oversight only of elementary schools, the superintendent controls schools of all grades; the inspector may be out of sympathy with the Code that he administers, the superintendent draws up his own; the superintendent is (in theory, at any rate) an expert teacher; and his business is not to find out at the end of the year that the results are bad, but to find out early in the year that they are likely to be bad, and to remove the causes. Till recently the duty of an inspector was to weigh the crop and assess its value; the duty of a superintendent is to advise in the choice of implements and seed, and show how the various agricultural operations may be performed with most ease and profit.

There must be thousands of superintendents in the Union; I had interviews with only six, and I cannot therefore say how far the real corresponds with the ideal. Those whom I met were all men of liberal culture, broad views and strong character, all men of intellectual eminence, all leaders of thought in their own department. I have reason to believe that they were fair types of the superintendent of the States and of the great cities; and I have equal reason to believe that in townships and districts, where schools are so few that the superintendent is employed for only part of his time and his salary is small, he is often not worth even his small salary.

It is obvious that a superintendent can render incalculable service to the schools under his care, provided he be the proper person, but, curiously enough, the system seems to be weakest just where the getting and the keeping of the proper person are concerned. He is nominated sometimes by the

State governor, sometimes by the State legislature, sometimes by the State Board of Education, and sometimes by the local Board; he is often elected by the people. The method of appointment by nomination must be good if the nominator is capable and conscientious. The possible effects of the other method I will illustrate by the words of an American writer who, speaking of the city of Buffalo, says:—"As for the superintendent, he is elected directly by the people, and must therefore almost necessarily be a politician. And when we consider that the superintendent has the sole power to appoint teachers it becomes clear that political influence is liable to play a very important part in their appointment."* The language of the Committee of Twelve, a body of the highest authority, is hardly less strong,—“In the majority of States the county superintendents are elected by the people of the county without any regard to the preparation or qualifications they may have for the work. Very few States require the superintendent to have any special qualifications, and in many instances supervisors are put in charge of teachers who know more about teaching than they do, and are required to hold examinations that they themselves could not pass.”†

And when the services of a good superintendent have been obtained there is no guarantee (I had almost said “there is no probability”) that they will be retained. The plan of appointing for a short period is almost universal. “The legal term of office in Massachusetts and Rhode Island is one year. In Connecticut it is at the pleasure of the State Board. In twenty States the term of office is two years, in four States three years, in seventeen States four years, but in no State does it exceed four years. The average length of the term of State superintendent is two years and ten months.”‡ And what is true of the State

* Rice : The Public School System of the United States, p. 76.

† Report of the Committee of Twelve on Rural Schools, p. 62.

‡ Report of the Committee of Twelve, p. 56.

superintendents is equally true of all the others. A good man may, at the end of his first term, be appointed for a second, but I was told that his chances of re-appointment were often in inverse proportion to his efficiency. If after being appointed through the influence of a political party he has discharged his duties with greater regard to the interests of the schools than the interests of the party, it is more than possible that he will have to make way for someone willing to take out of the fire the chestnuts of the political "boss." One superintendent, who had been recently appointed by the Board of a city notorious for its backwardness in education, informed me that if the question of his re-appointment came before the Board now barely a quarter of the members would vote for him: he had already disgusted the remaining three quarters by his ardour for reform.

If the superintendents were all as highly qualified as the best of them are; if they all had the great powers which many of the State and city superintendents have; and if they had reasonable security of tenure, the system would produce only the most beneficial results, and a modified form of it might with advantage be introduced into this country.

TEACHERS.

From the man who supervises the teaching I pass the man who does it—or, rather, to the woman, for most of the teachers are women—in fact, the pronoun used for the generic teacher is always *she*. I have not the figures for the whole country, but from a report of the Commissioner I learn that, of the 74,117 teachers employed in cities containing over 8,000 inhabitants, 68,344 (or 92 per cent.) are women. For the sake of comparison I may add that, of the 56,778 certificated teachers employed in our elementary schools, 34,663 (or 61 per cent.) are women. There was a man at the head of every normal school, every high school, and nearly every elementary school that I visited; but the assistants were almost exclusively women, except in the normal and the high schools.

In England the masters of secondary schools have, as a rule, undergone no professional preparation, and many think so well of themselves or so ill of their work that they do not deem any preparation necessary. The mistresses of secondary schools have a poorer estimate of themselves or a better estimate of their work. Most of them admit the necessity of training and the proportion of trained grows year by year. Of the masters in our elementary schools 29 per cent. are not college trained, and of the mistresses 52 per cent.; but trained or untrained all have been pupil-teachers. Whenever I spoke in America of pupil-teachers, I had to explain the meaning of the term, and when I had explained it I had some trouble in removing the doubts as to our national sanity. If we had never had a pupil-teacher no one would dream of creating him now; but for my part, as he exists, I would rather see him improved than abolished. I would give him something of a liberal education; I would have him serve only in a school where the head-teacher has leisure and ability to instruct him in his art; and I would not commit a class of even ten to his sole charge. I know that the system is utterly illogical, but I also know that it has produced a race of teachers whose technical skill and power of managing large classes are unexcelled.

In America the need of training is universally admitted, and I do not think the time is very far distant when training will be an essential qualification for a diploma. I think that it has become an almost essential qualification for employment in a high school or by a progressive Board. The majority of untrained teachers are employed in rural schools. These are often very small—in 1870 an old State like New York had 1,500 school districts with an average attendance of less than 10 pupils each. Furthermore, the school year is very short. In many parts of the Union it is less than 100 days (our minimum is 200 days). New York, with a school year of 160

days, is considered to have reached the ideal.* It is no wonder therefore that the teachers should not go to the trouble and expense of preparing themselves for occupation which is both poorly paid and intermittent, and which they probably hope to quit very soon.

The growing demand for trained teachers is seen in the growing supply of means of training. In two years the number of normal students was raised from 80,538 to 89,934. It must not be supposed that these were all being educated in institutions resembling our Training Colleges; a quarter of them were under instruction in high schools, colleges or universities having pedagogic courses.

The number of normal schools reported in 1896-97 was 362—namely 164 public and 198 private. [In the technology of American education “public” means provided and maintained by a State or local authority, while “private” is merely its negative, and would be applied alike to the University of Oxford and a dame school.] The fact that some of the most efficient normal schools are established by private enterprise and conducted for profit is an unmistakable indication of the demand for training.

Our government Training Colleges are all of one kind; American normal schools, public and private alike, are of the most bewildering variety. I visited only nine, but among that small number there were six distinct types. A candidate may be admitted because he (or rather she) wishes to be trained, or because she has passed an entrance examination, or is a high school graduate, or is a college graduate; she may be admitted for one year, for two years, for three or for four years; she may spend the time chiefly in improving her general culture, or she may spend it entirely in the study of education; her practice

* Millar: The School System of the State of New York, p. 52.

may be limited to a dozen criticism lessons, or she may spend half of every day or half of a school year in teaching. Where there is so much diversity a normal school will often have a distinctive character. For instance, Teachers College, Columbia University, (which is immeasurably superior to anything we have in this country) makes a special feature of training college professors, superintendents, and secondary teachers; several schools train kindergartners only; Oswego and Worcester are distinguished for child-study.

Numerous as they are, the normal schools cannot supply the number of new teachers required; still less can they give a complete training to the old teachers already at work. Yet they can do something by means of their summer schools and extension classes. When I attended a lecture on psychology by Professor Nicholas Murray Butler, at Teachers College, I was surprised to see a large hall crowded; and still more surprised to see so many middle-aged men and women present. On enquiry I learnt that they were not regular students of the college but teachers in the New York schools, attending extension classes after school hours, and that there were over 1,200 such students on the books.

The normal schools are supplemented in many ways—by teachers' associations, which meet to discuss not professional politics but the science and art of teaching; by reading circles; by training classes; and, above all, by teachers' institutes.

The training classes are attached to certain good schools, which undertake to furnish professors well qualified to give inexperienced teachers instruction in the art of teaching. In the State of New York—and, I presume, elsewhere—a subsidy is made towards the cost. The classes must contain from 10 to 25 students, and must continue in session for not less than 16 weeks.* The institutes are really temporary normal schools.

* Millar: The School System of the State of New York, p. 98.

They are held once or twice a year, and last about a week. They are conducted by paid experts, and all the teachers of a district are compelled to attend them.

Many of our adult teachers show great zeal in improving their scholastic attainments, but I am afraid that there is too great a tendency amongst some of them to look upon their certificates as visible proof that they have nothing more to learn about teaching. This tendency, combined with our national conservatism, makes us slow to admit new ideas. Froebel and Herbart having been dead for less than sixty years, it is too soon to expect a general knowledge of their principles in this country. Froebel's views are not always sound; our knowledge of them is sometimes derived from his disciples and not from himself; and his meaning is obscured by his incapacity to express it clearly and by his inherent mysticism; but he enunciated one truth of infinitely more value than all his gifts and games and songs—the grand truth that the task of the educator is the training of the self-activity of the child. Herbart again set forth a system of psychology which may be open to question, but he also set forth the doctrine of apperception, which is the key to all economical and successful instruction. Whether he originated the doctrine of correlation of studies which maps out clearly the whole course of a child's education; whether the doctrine of concentration of interest which he undoubtedly did originate is true or helpful I need not discuss. My point is that his theories, as well as Froebel's, have become part of the common stock of pedagogic thought in America to a far greater extent than they have in England.

KINDERGARTENS.

It must be admitted that the conditions for the growth of Froebelism were far more favourable in America than in England. There the kindergarten was planted in soil hitherto unoccupied; here it had to be grafted on to the infant school.

Children used to be admitted to the primary school at the age of six. Below that age they were cared for (or neglected) by their mothers. The sad case of those who were neglected awoke the pity of charitable ladies, who established the earliest kindergartens for their benefit. A good many of these "charity" kindergartens still exist, though a good many have also been taken over by the community, and cities now have kindergartens as an integral round in their public school ladder.

When the ideas of Froebel first reached England, the country already had a complete system of infant schools, admitting children at the age of three and keeping them till they were seven. Several courses were therefore open; the infant school might have been transformed into a kindergarten; it might have been divided into two parts, the lower a kindergarten; or something of the spirit and methods of Froebel might have been introduced into it. The last was the worst, but as it was the most consonant to our national instincts it was the course adopted. It gave us better infant schools, but it prevented our having good kindergartens as a link in our chain of state-aided schools.

The difference in origin accounts for the difference in development. In America the kindergarten is a complete and independent entity, self-contained, and living for itself alone. In England (except in private establishments) it has no separate existence. If it lives at all it lives as a part of something else. The infant teacher employs the gifts and games and songs with the younger classes as an easy and pleasant introduction to the reading and writing and arithmetic of the older; the kindergarten employs them as the best means of exercising the self-activity of her little flock; the one is thinking of her school, the other of her children; the one attaches importance to the methods of Froebel, the other to his principles.

I have pointed out one respect in which the American conditions are more favourable than the English. There is another: While the infant school exists everywhere, the kindergarten exists only in selected situations. With a population of about 31,000,000 England has nearly 2,000,000 children attending infant schools or departments. With a population of about 80,000,000 America has 86,000 children attending public kindergartens. And whereas there are thousands of infant schools in small towns and in rural districts 1,077 of America's 1,157 kindergartens are in towns of over 8,000 inhabitants. The conditions are therefore far less propitious in the one case than in the other.

There is a third respect in which America is at an advantage: The kindergartner has had special training for her special work; the infant teacher has received exactly the same preparation as her sister in the girls' school. Of the nine normal schools that I visited four were for kindergartners, and the other five had kindergarten departments. At the Chicago Kindergarten College candidates are not accepted unless they have had a good high school education or its equivalent, and a considerable number of them are college graduates. The course extends over three years, and is purely psychological and pedagogic. One half of each day is devoted to practice in the public kindergartens of the city. Hence you will understand that the students leave thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Froebel and thoroughly familiar with his ideas—familiar too with child-nature and the laws of mental growth, adept in the management of classes and in all the technicalities of gifts, occupations, songs, and games.

Contrast with that the training of our infant school teachers. While students they hear a few more or less perfunctory lectures on Froebel, but they are left to pick up his methods in the best way they can after leaving college, and

their knowledge of infant psychology is limited to the empiric and half-formulated truths deduced from their own experience. I am pleased to note that one of the books set for study in Training Colleges next year is a work on Froebel.

Let me mention in passing that I found at Chicago and elsewhere, in connection with the kindergarten colleges, classes for mothers and classes for nurses. We know how often the influence of the home counteracts the influence of the school. These classes are intended to bring the two into harmony. Let me also, as an illustration of the public interest and belief in the kindergarten, quote the following paragraph from the *New York Tribune* :—

“A manufacturing concern of Dayton, Ohio, has given notice that from now on preference will be given to young applicants for employment who have had a kindergarten training, and after 1915 no application for employment will be considered unless the applicant shall have had a kindergarten training. The owners of this factory have conducted kindergartens for the benefit of their seventeen hundred to eighteen hundred employés and have obtained highly gratifying results.”

APPERCEPTION.

Turning from Froebel to Herbart I found everywhere (but let me repeat that I do not know how far the schools I saw were typical) the theory of apperception not a dead dogma receiving mere tacit assent (like the Athanasian creed), but a living principle. Shall I explain the term apperception? When we perceive a thing for the first time we bring our perception into relation with the previous perceptions most closely resembling it. “With the assistance of the latter the sensation is held in consciousness, elevated into greater clearness, properly related to the remaining fields of thought, and so truly assimilated.”* The same sensations will convey very different ideas to two minds according to the previous

* Lange's Apperception, tr. De Garmo. p. 5.

contents of those minds. When I was crossing the Atlantic I saw one evening on the horizon a steamer, but I could say nothing about it except that it was a steamer standing black against a black sky. A sailor, however, exclaimed "That is one of the Standard Oil Company's ships." I asked him how he could tell, and he said by the position of her funnel, which was well astern. He explained that the Company brings oil to this country in bulk, and that to make room for the tanks the engines are set as far back as possible. Our sensations were the same, but his mind was better stored than mine, so that where I only perceived a steamer he apperceived a steamer belonging to the Standard Oil Company, crossing for a fresh cargo. Now, before a teacher attempts to impart new knowledge he ought to ascertain the knowledge already existing. New knowledge can be made real only by connecting it with the old, and half of the blunders that children make arise from their failure not to perceive but to apperceive. American teachers recognise this truth and act upon it. One of the most interesting and illuminating of the reports issued by the pioneers of child-study is Dr. Hall's monograph, "The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School."

CORRELATION OF STUDIES.

The term "correlation of studies" is used in two ways—one definite and the other vague. Used definitely, it means (1) "The arrangement of topics in proper sequence. . . . in such a manner that each branch develops in an order suited to the natural and easy progress of the child;" (2) "The adjustment of the branches of study in such a manner that the whole course at any time represents all the great divisions of human learning as far as possible at the stage of maturity at which the pupil has arrived;" (3) "The selection and arrangement of the branches and topics within each branch considered psychologically with a view to afford the best exercise of the faculties of the mind;" and (4) "The selection and arrangement

in orderly sequence of such objects of study as shall give the child an insight into the world that he lives in and a command over its resources such as is obtained by a helpful co-operation with one's fellows." * To decide how far this correlation is a living doctrine would require the minute examination of a far larger number of courses of study than I succeeded in obtaining, but as a proof of active interest I may mention that about five years ago a Committee of Fifteen experts of national (some of international) reputation was appointed to draw up a report on the subject. The report was presented in February, 1895, and my copy, dated the same year, is marked "Eleventh Thousand."

CONCENTRATION OF INTEREST.

The term "correlation of studies" is often employed vaguely as though it were synonymous with Herbart's term "concentration of interest." Many of the early disciples who accepted this theory made *Robinson Crusoe* the centre of the course. They used the story for a reading exercise, and connected it with the lessons in writing, geography arithmetic, &c. "It has been pointed out by critics of this method that there is always danger of covering up the literary features of the reading matter under accessories of mathematics and natural science. If the material for other branches is to be sought for in connection with the literary exercise it will distract the attention from the poetic unity. On the other hand, arithmetic and geography cannot be unfolded freely and comprehensively if they are to wait on the opportunities afforded in a poem or novel for their development. A correlation of this kind, instead of being a deeper correlation such as is found in all parts of human learning by the studies of the college and the university, is rather a shallow and uninteresting kind of correlation that reminds one of the system of mnemonics or artificial memory, which neglects the associations of facts and events with their causes and the history of their evolution, and

* Report of the Committee of Fifteen, pp. 1-4.

looks for unessential quips, puns, or accidental suggestions with a view to strengthening the memory."*

How far the Robinson Crusoe theory still holds the field I cannot say, but I found it applied religiously in one school. In other schools I found a saner concentration of interest. The various subjects of study were not separated by water-tight compartments; each was brought as far as possible into relation with all the rest. The flour, the suet, the currants, and the plums were not presented separately, but mixed into a wholesome and appetising pudding. In one school, for instance, the subject was Scotland. The children were not kept during one lesson to the geography and during another to the history, but both were taken together. The reading was a Waverley novel, the writing a biography of a famous Scot, the drawing a picture of Holyrood, and the modelling a contour of the country.

In the primary schools the most common centre of interest was nature study. The children were led to observe trees, plants, flowers, animals and birds, the weather and the ever-changing aspects of earth and sky; they were made to read and write and talk about, to draw and model what they had seen. In one school the first grade drew a circle for each day and coloured it according to the weather, the coloured circles forming the basis of the number work.

THE CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

I have been led into this long digression partly in order to show how the reports disseminated by the Bureau of Education, the conferences and institutes organised by the superintendents, the extension courses, the meetings of associations, and the discussions in the press combine with the native eagerness for new ideas to make American teachers alert and up-to-date. I

* Report of the Committee of Fifteen, p. 55.

return to the teachers in order to say something about their certificates and their salaries. In this country a certificate is granted only by the imperial government, and granted only after a series of tests as to scholastic and pedagogic fitness conducted by its own officers. It is valid in every part of the kingdom and lasts as long as the teacher holding it. Instead of this simplicity there is in America a multiplicity of methods of certification which I cannot hope to make clear. Every normal school grants a student who has completed her course a diploma, which may be one of several kinds, and which may command respect or be held in slight esteem; on the strength of this diploma or after an examination the State or the local authorities may grant a certificate, which may be good for six months, for a year, for three or four years, or for life; and which may be renewed with or without re-examination.

SALARIES.

The facts which I have already cited concerning the immense number of exceedingly small rural schools, open for less than half the year, and taught by untrained teachers account for the further fact that, notwithstanding the high esteem in which the public school is held, the average salary of an American is little better than the average salary of an English teacher. The average salary of our certificated masters is £122 14s. 11d., of our certificated mistresses £81 9s. 9d., of our certificated teachers £97 11s. 2d. The average salary in the whole of the United States is £101, in cities of over 8,000 £160 10s., outside such cities £84 15s. In the large cities the average is much higher than in ours. In Philadelphia the average salary of a "supervising principal" (that is a head teacher who does not teach) is £413, and the assistants (mostly women) are paid from £94 to £148. In Chicago, high school principals are paid from £400 to £600, high school assistants from £170 to £400, principals of elementary schools from £240 to £500, assistants from £195 to £235, assistants in grammar

schools from £100 to £165, and assistants in primary schools from £100 to £160. While I was in New York the State legislature passed a law regulating the salaries to be paid to the teachers in the city of New York. These range for women assistants from £120 to £300, according to attainments and length of service; for men assistants from £216 to £430, and for principals from £350 to £550 for women, and from £550 to £750 for men. To a foreigner it seems curious that an outside authority should come between employers and employed. The probable effect of the new law will be to increase the size of the classes, for the Board, compelled to pay more to each individual, will try to keep down the total payment by reducing the number of individuals.

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

Having dealt with the public organisation of education, with the superintendents and with the teachers, I can only touch on a few miscellaneous topics.

Recitations.

What we call lessons are called recitations, and I never saw a recitation which was quite like one of our lessons. The teachers, instead of asking questions which admitted of a short, definite answer, seemed to prefer asking such as required a little speech, and the first was often followed by a series addressed to the same child—who, by the way, always stood up when speaking. If a book was the foundation of study, the question was directed to finding out whether the pupils understood it rather than whether they remembered it.

Classes were often divided into two parts, one doing a recitation and the other "busy work"—writing, drawing, modelling, &c. Even then two or three children would probably be doing something at the blackboards, which were fixed to the walls all round the room. I did not see an easel except in

drawing lessons. Some of the abundant board space would frequently be occupied by pictures or writing not intended to be cleaned out for a long while. Sometimes the chairs were on pivots, so that the whole class could face the board on any wall without rising.

Discipline.

The discipline appeared good though corporal punishment was generally forbidden, or because it was. Still there was a difference. I did not hear any short, sharp words of command, or see any concerted movements except at drill. The tone of a class was more that of a big family than that of a small regiment. In the kindergarten there was no restraint whatever on the natural impulses of the little ones, except the gentle and imperceptible restraint of the teacher's personality. They talked and laughed and moved as freely in the class-room as they would have done in the nursery. When the time for dismissal came they stood up in turns and advanced to the kindergartner, who bowed to each and shook hands. I never saw anything prettier in a school than the mixture of dignity and sympathy shown by some of the kindergartners.

The ideal of discipline is not that children should be restrained by the will of the teacher from doing wrong but that they should be incited by their own will to do right. The superintendent is therefore recommended to note on his first visit to a school "whether the movements of the pupils are self-directed or controlled from without." * I visited one school which was organized for self-government on the same plan as a municipal corporation. It elected a mayor, a clerk, a treasurer and an attorney, who took cognizance of all offences against the common weal. The master told me that whereas formerly there were three hundred cases referred to him in a year now there were only five or six.

* Pickard : School Supervision, p. 130.

Corporal punishment is not "used in our colleges, nor in our high schools, nor in the first and second grades of our primary schools, nor in our kindergartens. It is rarely used in the seventh and eighth grades of our grammar schools. In the four remaining grades, as in our rural schools its use is becoming rarer."* By many authorities the employment of the rod is absolutely prohibited. Troublesome children are sometimes suspended (that is prevented from attending) till they promise reformation, and incorrigible children are sometimes expelled.

Physical Training.

Most of the schools and all the colleges that I saw had excellent gymnasiums and a drill-instructor constantly employed but not one had any pretence of a playground.

Out-door Work.

There is much out-door work everywhere. I happened to reach Chicago during the first days of spring, and half the classrooms of one school which I visited were empty in consequence, the children being out gardening or watching the budding trees. In Central Park, New York, I saw several groups in charge of their teachers, and the sight was obviously common for I was almost the one who turned to look at it. In Teachers College the professor of geography told me that he was about to take his class all the way to Pennsylvania to study certain manifestations of nature's forces at first hand.

Mixed Education.

We in Wales are much exercised about the comparative merits of the separate education of the sexes (boys and girls in different schools), co-education (boys and girls in different classes in the same school), and mixed education (boys and girls in the same classes). In America they consider that the Creator

* Baldwin: School Management and School Methods, p. 140.

settled that question when He first sent boys and girls to the same family. Except in the City of New York and in some of the older parts of Boston I never even heard of the separation of the sexes. In the kindergarten, in the primary school, in the grammar school, boys and girls, and in the colleges and universities, men and women were all working together in the same classes, and it never seemed to have occurred to the males that they ought to be forward or sheepish, nor to the females that they ought to be fascinating or coy.

Mixed Nationalities.

We in Wales also talk much of the trouble of teaching English to children whose mother-tongue is Welsh; but our bilingual difficulty is microscopic beside the multilingual difficulty in some parts of America. Chicago, for instance, with a population of 488,683 Americans, has 248,142, Irish, 44,223 English, 12,942 Scotch, 3,784 Welsh, 34,907 Canadians, and 25,814 negroes. I dare say that these can speak English nearly as well as if they had been born in Chicago; but what of the following?

	<i>American born.</i>	<i>American born, one parent American.</i>	<i>Foreign born.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
German	261,704	21,528	207,310	490,542
Swedish	52,893	1,435	56,862	111,100
Polish	52,158	370	44,325	96,853
Bohemian	47,965	799	40,516	89,280
Norwegian	22,732	710	22,248	45,690
Russian	18,140	39	20,808	38,987
French	10,589	833	10,418	21,840
Italian	10,348	128	12,585	13,061

The authorities do not apprehend any social or political danger from the preponderance of the foreign element. The

actual emigrants may mingle regret for their old home with love for the new; but, thanks to the schools, the children are thoroughly American in sentiment.

Patriotism.

Patriotism is carefully fostered in all the schools. In marked contrast to our own neglect of history is their universal teaching of it, and their object is not merely cultivating the mind, but preparing for the duties of a citizen and instilling pride in the republic. The aid of the emotions is sought as well as of the intellect. In some States there is a law, and elsewhere there is a custom having the force of law, that the national flag should be displayed on all public buildings, schools, of course, included. Certain pupils are often told off as a colour guard, and the school is sometimes opened with a salute to the flag.

"Days."

Independence, Thanksgiving, and Decoration Days and all other public holidays, are kept with much pomp and ceremony. The birthdays of Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell and others are celebrated. Lessons are given on their lives, and extracts from their writings are read or recited. Arbour Day, too, is a universal (often a compulsory) institution. It was observed while I was in Chicago, and again while I was in New York. In Chicago, the children of the schools near Humboldt Park were marched to the Park and massed round a platform. They sang appropriate songs and recited appropriate poems, the superintendent of the park gave an address, and the children planted three trees. In New York, the children of the "up-town" schools planted many trees; in the neighbourhood of Bedford Park they planted five hundred tulips; "down-town," where they have no open spaces, they merely formed themselves into a league for the protection of trees. Bird Day and Dewey Day also were kept while I was the country.

The Religious Difficulty.

There is no religious difficulty in America. Had I been asked the reason three months ago I should have answered that there was no religion (I mean in the schools, of course), but I should have been wrong. The reading of the Bible is often prescribed by law, though comment is sometimes forbidden. "In the public schools of 808 cities and villages of 4,000 population and over," says the Commissioner, "religious exercises are held in 651, not held in 157, and prohibited in 77. In 602 of the cities the Bible is read, in 536 daily prayer is offered, and in 226 there is sacred song. In only one State [Wisconsin] is the prohibition of religious exercises general." In 99 cities and villages comment is forbidden.

Oratorical Competition.

While I was in Chicago I attended a most interesting competition. There is a literary and debating society in connection with each high school, and once a year the societies engage in a public oratorical contest, each being represented by its champion. A prize of 100 dollars is given to the first, of 75 dollars to the second, and of 50 dollars to the third, with gold medals in addition. This year the competition took place in a large and beautiful concert hall, which, in spite of a minimum charge of 25 cents for admission, was crowded. The chairman was a boy, and the whole proceedings were conducted by the children themselves. Two girls and seven boys entered, and they discoursed on such subjects as "Freedom's Martyr" (Lincoln), "Our Foreign Policy," "A poet of peace and a poet of war." They declaimed with all the confidence of old politicians, and put as much energy and earnestness into their speeches as if they were striving to win votes for the right party. The three presidents of the three great local universities were the judges of "thought and composition," while two distinguished lawyers and a senator were the judges of "delivery." They must have been present, but they kept themselves entirely in the background, and I failed to discover

them. Such competitions being common, and elocution being much more studied than it is with us, no wonder that Americans have a pre-eminence in speech-making.

Libraries.

The public library is a very important factor of the public life of America. It is munificently housed and generously stocked, not with books for the general reader alone but with books for the specialist also. In the course of the many conversations which I had with publishers I ventured to express an opinion that it could not possibly pay to import certain English works on education, but I was informed that, though the sale to teachers might be small, there would be a considerable demand from the libraries.

Every public library had a children's department, with its own room, its own volumes, its own catalogue, and its own librarian. Pictures bearing on the nature study of the schools and on the topics of the day were exhibited on screens.

Every school had its own library, and occasionally a reading-room in addition. In several of the normal schools the library was so large that a librarian had to give her whole time to its management.

In the superintendent's office at Philadelphia there was a pedagogic library of over six thousand volumes brought together for the benefit of the teachers of the city.

CONCLUSION.

There are many other topics on which I should be pleased to say something, but I have already exceeded the limit that I had set for myself. I saw many things to interest me, and some to surprise. I brought back pleasant memories of kindnesses received, hundreds of useful hints, and a more open mind. I should have liked to bring back also some of America's beautiful buildings, a little of her spirit of liberality, a few of her superfluous dollars, her respect for teachers, and the deep faith in the value of education on which that respect is founded.

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